



# Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council

March 17, 2026, 10:00-11:30 AM

## Meeting of the Directors

**Owasco** – Ed Wagner, **Cayuga County** – Aileen McNabb -Coleman, **City of Auburn** – Ginny Kent, **Niles** – Joan Jayne, **Locke** – Thane Benson, **Scipio** – Nancy Hart, **Fleming** – Karen VanLiew, **Town of Moravia** – Terry Palmer, **Village of Moravia** –Chris Fulton, **Village of Groton** – Theodore Skibinski, **Summerhill** – Charlie Ripley, **Sennett** – Tom Blair, **Dryden** – TBD, **Lansing** – Joseph Wetmore  
**Executive Director**- Adam Effler

Presiding: Dr. Adam Effler

- A. Board of Directors – Roll call: Owasco-Ed Wagner, City of Auburn-Ginny Kent, Scipio-Gary Muchler for Nancy Hart (online), Fleming-Karen VanLiew, Town of Moravia-Terry Palmer, Ex Officio members attending: John West (online), Carol Sutkus, Jesse Lloyd, Michele Wunderlich (online),
- B. Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda made by Ginny Kent; seconded by Terry Palmer. Vote unanimously approved the motion.
- C. Approval of Minutes from January 20, 2026, Board Meeting. Motion to approve the January 20, 2026, minutes made by Terry Palmer; seconded by Ginny Kent. Vote unanimously approved the motion.
- D. Public to be Heard: none heard
- E. Director’s Summary – Adam Effler (distributed for review prior to meeting) Dr. Effler’s report can be found at <https://www.olwmc.org/news>.

### Watershed Rules and Regulations

#### Project Update:

A meeting with representation from the OLWMC, Cayuga County Planning Department, Cayuga County Department of Health, City of Auburn, and CNYRPDB was held on March 9, 2026, to discuss finalizing the updated regulatory map associated with the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations. The CNYRPDB is responsible for approving the updated map.

### Recognition, Awareness, Education and Outreach Projects Updates

- During the March 14, 2026, Bob Brower Scientific Symposium, OLWMC staff presented on the status of the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations update project, 2025 watershed conditions and inspections, and 9E Plan Coordination Committee projects and programs implementation, in the context of recommendations of the Owasco Lake Watershed 9E Plan for Phosphorus Reduction.
- The OLWMC’s March 6, 2026, staff feature article in the Citizen newspaper highlighted water quality differences between tap and bottled drinking water.
- The OLWMC coordinated with the Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA) to gain an Owasco Lake community presence at EPF Lobby and Finger Lakes Advocacy Days in Albany, February 10-11, 2026. Representation from regional lake association partners helped educate NYS legislators and raise awareness about water-quality and watershed priorities.
- OWLA members at listened to presentations from Assemblymember Deborah Glick and Senator Pete Harckham followed by team meetings with Legislative Offices.

- At the Finger Lakes Advocacy Day, 15 regional watershed organizations, land trusts, and agencies met with legislators to advocate for continued funding for nutrient reduction and watershed protection, enhanced water quality research and monitoring, and increased staffing at key environmental agencies.

#### Nine Element Watershed Plan (9EP)

##### Project Update:

The next 9E Committee meeting will be held on March 25, 2026. The committee will soon discuss potential project targets within Sucker and Veness Brook stream corridors based on assessments made there in 2025.

#### Watershed Lake and Tributary Monitoring

##### Projects Update:

- A meeting was held February 26, 2026 to plan the 2026 OWLA Tributary Monitoring program. OLWMC staff are collaborating with the Cayuga County Planning Department and OWLA volunteers to prepare for the sampling program. The resolution to fund the Finger Lakes Institute's Owasco Lake monitoring buoy and the update to the data portal was approved by the Cayuga County Legislature in February, 2026.
- On Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, the PFAS-in-foam research project, endorsed by the OLWMC and funded by the Water Resources Institute, will be presented to in-person attendees by scientists from Binghamton University and Global Aquatic Research LLC. There will be a remote link for interested members of the public to join the morning session.

#### NYS-awarded Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2)

No new updates

#### Municipal Codes and Ordinances

No new updates

#### Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs Identification and Programming:)

No new updates.

#### Land Holdings

##### Fillmore Nature Preserve Project Update:

OLWMC staff will engage with 2026 Fillmore Nature Preserve stewards in the near term to share contact information and plan their approach for trails maintenance.

##### Venice Property Acquisition:

No new updates

##### Potential OLWMC Acquisitions Review:

No new updates

TNC has expressed interest in having the OLWMC own an additional property poised for long term stewardship and preservation within the Owasco Lake watershed, a 100-acre mixed farmland parcel in the Town of Groton. TNC will present the remaining acquisition opportunity to the OLWMC Board of Directors.

##### Partner Land Acquisitions/Targets Update:

Camp Casowasco has officially announced its closure. The FLLT is interested in exploring ways to conserve the landmark property and buildings.

#### Grant Opportunities, Projects, Programs, and Funding

### Grants and Programs Updates:

- New York State recently announced more than \$25.5 million in grants to support 29 water quality and climate resiliency projects in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC's) Region 7. The Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District was awarded the following:
  - \$448,000 through WQIP to work with local municipal partners to complete hydroseeding to stabilize road ditches. The program will reduce erosion and improve water quality throughout Cayuga County.
  - \$285,200 through WQIP to purchase live edge plow blades, weather sensors, and truck-mounted brine spreaders to reduce excess road salt application county-wide, protecting the water quality of drinking water supplies including Owasco Lake.
- The Cayuga County Planning Department will be hosting the 2026 Spring Electronics Recycling Event on Saturday, March 21, 2026 (<https://www.sunnking.com/events/cayuga-county-residents-free-electronics-recycling-event>). The event is a free and convenient opportunity for Cayuga County residents to safely recycle unwanted or outdated electronics. There are three sites:
  - Central Site - the Finger Lakes Mall at 1579 Clark Street Rd., Auburn, NY from 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM. This site requires pre-registration at
  - Northern Site - Ira County Highway Garage at 2672 Ira Station Rd., Ira, NY from 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM. No registration required.
  - Southern Site - Venice County Highway Garage at 2942 Long Hill Rd., Venice Center, NY from 10:30 AM – 1:30 PM. No registration required.
- OLWMC staff will participate on the Forest Expansion Network Steering Committee, supporting TNC's efforts towards advancing a state-wide reforestation initiative to plant 25 million trees by 2033. The Forest Expansion Network Steering Committee envisions a strategic and effective forest establishment movement in New York state that helps to maximize social and environmental benefits by meeting a range of goals. To help build this movement, the committee will further envision a well-coordinated, adequately supported, and inclusive alliance of partners and leaders that work together to address regional and statewide forest establishment needs at every stage, from funding identification to maintenance. The committee believes that collaboration and coordination will accelerate forest establishment in NYS, elevate a collective voice, and enable more people, communities, and organizations to benefit from nature-based solutions. 2026 goals include developing a broad and inclusive suite of forest establishment leaders to share views and design collaboration-based strategies in NYS that:

### NFWF SOGL Project Update:

- The NYSDEC and US Army Corps of Engineers permit applications have been finalized for the OLWMC's upcoming stream stabilization project, which targets improvements along the Owasco Inlet. Project implementation is planned for the summer-fall of 2026 with implementation led by the CCSWCD.

### F. Board of Directors/Municipality Representatives Feedback:

#### G. Treasurer's Audit and Finance Report.

- i. February 2026 Financials Approval – Adam Effler reported as of February 28, 2026 Total Checking \$446,202.37, Total Current Assets \$450,352.62, Total Liabilities and Equity \$482,453.25. Motion to approve February report made by Karen VanLiew. seconded by Gary Mutchler. Vote unanimously approved motion. Dr. Effler noted that February financials reflect January financials as well.
- ii. Dr. Effler reported that all necessary materials have been submitted to the auditor for the annual financial audit.

- H. Lake Level Report – John West reported the lake elevation at 711.5 ft. He plans to continue monitoring over next month with the expectation of levels stabilizing at 712 ft. He does not expect any drastic changes within the next month.
- I. NYSDEC Finger Lakes Watershed Program– Gabriel Yerdon: unavailable.
- J. Owasco Watershed Lake Association Update – Carol Sutkus: Bob Bower Symposium was very successful. Thank you to Jesse Lloyd and Adam Effler for their great presentations. Six area Rotary clubs are providing \$32,000 to kick off the Woolly Adelgid treatment program this year. Rotary is supporting two fundraisers for the program: a Pancake Breakfast at Moravia Fire Dept on 3/21/2026, and a Chicken Barbeque on April 18, 2026 in the Modern Market parking lot.
- K. Cornell Cooperative Extension Update –Frank Clarke-unavailable.
- L. Watershed Inspection Monthly Report – Jesse Lloyd, watershed inspection report can be found at <https://www.olwmc.org/news>
- M. Communications: Finger Lakes Prism announced recruitment process for watershed inspection positions across region. Keynote next month CC soil and water conservation district will present their plans for the year.
- N. Issues of Concern: none heard
- O. Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2026.
- P. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn made by Karen VanLiew and seconded by Terry Palmer Vote unanimously approved the motion. Meeting adjourned a 10:55 am

Respectfully submitted,  
Vivian Cunningham